



Child Poverty

**92nd ANNUAL STUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
MONDAY 28th AND TUESDAY 29th OCTOBER,
2019
CONCERT HALL, PERTH**

DECISIONS OF CONFERENCE

I - RESOLUTIONS CARRIED

Resolution no. 1 - Child Poverty

"That this Conference notes with alarm that it is estimated almost 1 in 4 children in Scotland are living in poverty and projections of child poverty levels are likely to increase.

"These figures are truly hugely disturbing. Over 365,000 children in the UK are destitute and inequality is increasing. In Scotland, the wealth of the 11 billionaires on the Rich List has risen in the last year at much higher proportions than the rest of the UK.

"Scotland's children deserve better. We, therefore, call on the STUC Women's Committee to:

- work with organisations like Child Poverty Action Group Scotland and The Poverty Alliance;
- encourage affiliates to campaign against child poverty causes like Universal Credit; and
- lobby the Scottish Government to take sustained necessary action and make considerable investment to meet and exceed statutory targets on child poverty."

Mover: STUC Women's Committee

Resolution no. 2 - Eradicating Child Poverty in Scotland

“That this Conference is alarmed at the increasing rates of child poverty throughout Scotland, estimated at around quarter of a million, creating high levels of inequality.

“Continual barriers of low income, real term cuts to tax credits and benefits, and the harsh implementation of austerity measures for several years, has resulted in families being faced with the dilemma of whether they should heat their homes, pay their rent or put food on the table.

“Reports carried out have shown gender, disability and ethnicity can create barriers to employability and we cannot ignore these are linked to child poverty. Conference notes the highest percentage of children living in poverty is in ‘working’ families and, while we recognise the Scottish Government has made some progress, radical and decisive change is required for the future of Scotland’s children.

“The Scottish Government is unlikely to reach the target set as contained in the Child Poverty Act (2017), and a recent report by the Resolution Foundation projected child poverty in Scotland will grow to 29% by 2023.

“Conference believes there is a need for action to be taken to support many excluded from the labour market, to secure a decent income, to restore dignity and respect to families, while improving prospects of thousands of children across the country.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee, working with the STUC General Council, to:

- seek to influence and inform public opinion by highlighting the importance of eradicating child poverty, while working with all STUC Equality Committees to facilitate and organise a one day conference;
- campaign with affiliates to remove any existing barriers to securing employment with decent terms and conditions applicable to all; and

- publish the findings of the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan Working Group and the Disability Employment Action Plan implemented by the Scottish Government.”

Mover: Communication Workers' Union

Resolution no. 3 - Mitigating the Impact of Child Poverty in Education

“That this Conference is appalled at the continuing rise of child poverty in Scotland and the UK, as a result of political decision-making which places profit for a privileged few ahead of the wellbeing and prosperity of most ordinary citizens, including children.

“Conference finds it wholly unacceptable that almost a quarter of Scotland’s children and 39% of lone mothers are in poverty; that poverty is forecast to blight the lives of 38% of children in Scotland by 2030/31 unless there’s decisive political intervention; that 8,540 households in Scotland no longer receive benefits for a third or subsequent child due to the two-child cap on social security benefits; and that 50 women in Scotland were affected by the ‘non-consensual conception’ exemption (the ‘rape clause’).

“Conference agrees that the education system must be provided with the resources it needs to mitigate as far as possible the impact of low-income poverty on children’s education and therefore, life chances.

“Conference commends the work of the EIS in its longstanding anti-poverty campaigning, and welcomes the introduction of a minimum school clothing grant of £100 in all Scottish local authorities for low-income families; the provision of free sanitary products in educational establishments in Scotland; and the acquisition of Scottish Government funding to offer new professional learning to Scotland’s teachers on the nature, causes and consequences of poverty.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee and General Council to support continued campaigning and lobbying for:

- universal free school/nursery meal provision;
- free music tuition for all school pupils who wish it; and
- the elimination of all cost barriers and provision of equal access for all children and young people, regardless of family income, to the full range of opportunities provided by the education system so that all young people can participate in, enjoy, and benefit more equally from, their education.”

Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland

Resolution no. 4 - Child Poverty and Additional Support Needs

“That this Conference notes the significant increase in the number of children with additional support needs in Scottish schools over the past decade, with over 1 in 4 pupils now having an identified additional support need.

“Conference also notes the strong relationship between the incidence of additional support needs in children and young people, and the likelihood of them living in poverty. The Growing Up in Scotland study found that there was a notably higher prevalence of additional support needs amongst children living in the two most deprived quintiles. Research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation reports that ‘six times as many children in the most deprived families are identified as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties compared with the least deprived families’. A 2018 Audit Commission report on child mental health stated that children living in low income households are three times more likely to suffer mental health problems than their more affluent peers.

“Conference affirms its commitment to a fully inclusive comprehensive education system, that is fully resourced to meet the needs of all children and young people, including those with increasingly diverse additional support needs.

“Conference is deeply concerned that Teacher Census data shows that amidst rising need, ASN teacher numbers are falling, and further, that numbers of support assistants are in decline and mainstream class sizes continue to grow.

“Conference therefore calls upon Scottish Government and local authorities to work together to ensure:

- the provision of the necessary resources, staffing and infrastructure to deliver on the promise of ASL legislation;
- mainstream class size reduction to a maximum of 20; and
- the legal obligations placed by the Fairer Scotland Duty on public bodies to actively consider how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions, in this case with regards to ASN, are met.”

Mover: Educational Institute of Scotland

Resolution no. 5 - Women and Poverty

“That this Conference notes that poverty in Scotland is gendered with women more likely to be living in poverty than men.

“The gender pay gap is a key contributor in this statistic. Tackling women’s inequality in the labour market is therefore critical to overcoming women’s experiences of poverty.

“In line with the multiple labour market barriers experienced by different groups of women, there is a particularly high risk of poverty among black and minority ethnic, disabled and refugee and asylum-seeking women.

“Poverty in Scotland has a female face.

- Women are paid on average 15% less per hour than men.
- Women are more likely to be economically dependent than men.
- 89% of women experience financial abuse, as aspects of coercive control when experiencing domestic abuse.

“Women’s inequality at work is a key contributor to women’s higher rates of poverty. Women comprise the majority of low paid workers, and work that is seen as ‘women’s work’, such as cleaning, care and retail, is systematically undervalued in the labour market.

“Women are more likely than men to have caring responsibilities and therefore face the additional pressure of finding work that allows them to balance earning with caring. This sees women further concentrated into low paid and insecure work, as most part-time work is found in the lowest paid jobs and sectors.

“With women more than twice as dependent on social security than men, changes to social security and ‘welfare reform’ have put women at a greater risk of deeper and sustained poverty.

“Conference asks the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- work with the General Council and equality strands to address women’s poverty and highlight at every opportunity;
- lobby the Scottish and UK Governments to tackle gender inequality;
- work with organisations seeking to eradicate women’s poverty; and
- take other actions as it sees fit.”

Mover: STUC Women’s Committee

Resolution no. 6 - Women's Poverty

“That this Conference recognises that poverty worldwide is gendered, women are more likely to live in poverty than men and to be working part-time for low pay. The gender pay gap has remained stable in the last 20 years and this has a negative impact on women's incomes. Studies show that women are significantly less likely to escape low pay than men.

“Conference welcomes the increase to the National Living Wage, but it remains too low. The continuation of age-related pay excluded young workers from the higher National Minimum Wage rate and entrenches issues of low pay for young people.

“Both low pay and cuts to social security provision are major contributors to women's poverty.

“Conference asks the STUC Women's Committee to ensure that the STUC's campaigning on low paid workers places strong emphasis on women's poverty and low pay and supports the call for:

- young workers to be paid the full adult rate;
- a £10 per hour minimum wage;
- tackling of short-hours contracts through a statutory minimum contract of 16 hours per week;
- ending the two child limit, scrapping the benefit cap and raising the level of child benefits; and
- restoring the annual uprating of working age benefits.”

Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers

Resolution no. 7 - End Poverty in the World's Fifth Richest Economy

“That this Conference condemns the rise in poverty across the UK, especially child poverty. Trade unions have warned in the past that Government austerity policies at every level would hit the poorest hardest whilst the richest few amass greater and greater wealth, and this has come to pass.

“Two thirds of children who live below the breadline come from families with one or both parents in work. The rise of insecure employment, zero hours contracts and bogus self-employment has left more and more people struggling to make ends meet and dependent on food banks in the world's fifth richest economy. The roll out of Universal Credit has added to the misery for millions of claimants, left for weeks without income and struggling to live on what they do receive.

“This has a particular impact on women, whether as parents, as breadwinners in low paid jobs, or as benefits claimants. Where these women are Black, disabled or from the LGBT+ community the impact is further increased.

“A recent report by the UN Special Rapporteur, Sir Philip Alston, concluded what we have been saying for many years - this poverty is a political choice; austerity could easily have spared the poor, if the political will had existed to do so.

“Conference deplores those political choices that have vastly increased inequality in this country and we are concerned that things will only get worse after Brexit and the poor, especially women and children will continue to pay the highest price.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women's Committee to work with the General Council to urge the Scottish Government to use their devolved powers to prioritise reducing the impacts of austerity, making any and all relevant policy and legislative changes available to them to reduce the impact of poverty on our most vulnerable citizens.”

Mover: Aberdeen Trades Union Council

Resolution no. 8 - School Holiday Hunger

“That this Conference notes the increasing attention being paid to the issue of school holiday hunger and, in particular, the challenge faced by many families where children receive free school meals during term time but have no provision in school holidays.

“A number of Scottish councils have already stepped in to provide universal holiday meals schemes, including North Lanarkshire and Fife, and a COSLA survey in 2018 showed that local authorities across Scotland are already using core budgets to provide food during holiday periods, the majority of which was attached to existing holiday clubs or other activities.

“The costs of summer for families also include increased childcare and transport costs as well as charges for activities such as swimming pools. Standstill core funding for councils and rising demand from families means that the cost of supporting families represents a rising share of core budgets and is then a further pressure on reducing costs in other spending areas.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work with affiliates and child poverty groups to better understand the scale of school holiday hunger, and campaign for funding from central government to alleviate the problem whilst also protecting other vital council services.”

Mover: GMB Scotland

Resolution no. 9 - Free Healthy School Meals for All

“That this Conference notes that the recently published figures show an alarming number of families, women and children living in dire poverty.

“Conference believes that it is time to resurrect the free school healthy meals campaign to ensure that at least our school children are provided with the nourishment they require to study and succeed.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women's Committee to work with affiliates and other organisations, including Child Poverty Action Group, to campaign for free healthy school meals for all.”

Mover: Unite the Union

Amended Resolution no. 10 - Protecting Abortion Rights

“That this Conference is outraged at the legislative change made on Abortion Law in Alabama USA in May 2019, which saw 25 male Republican Senators passing a Bill, which was a clear attack on a woman’s access to basic rights.

“Conference deplores this action, along with existing abortion legislation still in place throughout many countries, and we must send a clear and strong message that this Conference will not accept any form of regression or threat to a woman’s right to choose.

“The STUC Women’s Committee has a long and proud history of defending abortion rights and we call on the incoming Committee to:

- work closely with Abortion Rights Group to challenge and campaign against any threat to abortion legislation both nationally and internationally;
- continue to support sisters in Northern Ireland in their fight to have Victorian abortion laws decriminalised;
- encourage trade unions to affiliate and financially support the Abortion Rights Group to ensure women’s rights remain human rights;
- publicise and promote information to affiliates to raise awareness and discourage discrimination; and
- continue to lobby for the introduction of ‘buffer zones’ that would ban anti-choice campaigners from demonstrating outside facilities where women are receiving medical care, such as hospitals and abortion clinics, as no woman should face harassment or intimidation whilst trying to access care.”

Mover: **Communication Workers’ Union**
Seconded: **Public & Commercial Services Union**

Resolution no. 11 - A Woman's Right to Choose

“That this Conference notes that the rise in attacks on a woman's right to choose has become vicious. These groups, including far right politicians, are determined to end the hard won rights of the trade union sisters who have gone before us. It is therefore our responsibility to fight back against these attacks and preserve, what is rightfully ours as women, the freedom to choose.

“We therefore call upon the STUC Women's Committee to ensure that it is made clear to the opponents of a woman's right to choose, that they are not welcome in Scotland.”

Mover: Unite the Union

Resolution no. 12 - Decriminalisation of Abortion

“That this Conference notes with reference to the recent votes in the House of Commons decriminalising abortion in Northern Ireland and extend abortion rights to Northern Irish women.

“Currently women in England and Wales are subject to criminalisation under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861. This law was passed when Queen Victoria was on the throne. It has no relevance today and does not take account of modern medicine and the professional regulation of the medical profession.

“In Scotland, abortion law is devolved to the Scottish Parliament. However in Scotland, similar to England and Wales, it is a crime to procure an abortion. Unlike in England and Wales, however, this is not set out in the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, but in common law. In Scotland, it is settled law that any improper act *‘by the mother or any other person calculated to destroy the foetus or cause its premature expulsion from the body of the mother constitutes a common law crime, that of abortion’* (Stair Memorial Encyclopaedia).

“In that regard, we call upon the STUC Women’s Committee to lobby the Scottish Government to ensure that women living in Scotland do not end up being the only women, in the whole of the United Kingdom, who are subject to the criminal law regarding their decisions on abortion.

“With the law as it stands, abortion is still illegal in Scotland but can be permitted when two doctors agree in good faith that a woman meets the criteria contained within the Abortion Act 1967. A woman has no right to abortion. The need for two doctors to sign off an abortion is one of the most paternalistic aspects of the current 1967 Act and further undermines women’s autonomy and reproductive decision-making.”

Mover: Fire Brigades Union

Resolution no. 13 - Flexible Family Support

“That this Conference notes that parents and carers in the performing arts often require flexible family support, due to the unpredictable nature of their careers. Short term work contracts, precarious work, atypical work hours and a necessity to travel for engagements are examples of the particular challenges our members face.

“Access to flexible, reliable childcare is essential, if women are to have equal access to work, continuity and longevity in their careers and if workforces in the entertainment industry are to be more diverse.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to support Equity’s work campaigning for greater awareness and recognition of flexible working arrangements amongst employers and publicly funded arts and entertainment organisations.”

Mover: **Equity**

Resolution no. 14 - Childcare

“That this Conference notes a nationwide survey has found that childcare costs in Scotland have risen by more than a quarter in the last three years.

“A poll carried out by YouGov asked more than 3,000 Scots what they were spending on childcare, with parents now spending an average of £276 per month or £3,312 a year. The cost has risen £720 a year since 2016, when average spending was £216, a 28% increase.

“Parents are turning to grandparents to provide free care, findings suggest. More than half of grandparents (53%) said they look after their grandchildren. Research has also shown that 9% of great grandparents are asked to help with childcare.

“Glasgow TUC also wants to highlight the issue of shift workers with many finding childcare impossible to access.

“We acknowledge that much work has been done over the last few years to provide childcare but it is still not enough. Funding and more childcare workers is still a problem that needs to be solved for the future for parents.

“We ask the STUC Women's Committee to have discussions with the Scottish Government to integrate expansion and more investment in childcare provision; and to work with affiliates and women's organisations to identify specific needs for childcare in Scotland, within particular geographical areas and employment sectors.”

Mover: Glasgow Trades Union Council

Resolution no. 15 - The use of Split Shifts in Social Care

“That this Conference notes that there has been a substantial increase in the use of split shifts and the number of employers seeking to introduce split shifts in the social care sector. A split shift means working a shift comprising two or more separate periods of duty in a day. Some split shifts are used alongside a seven day rota using an exemption in the Working Time Directive so that employers are not required to comply with rest time between shifts.

“HSE guidance advises that split shifts should be avoided as they do not allow enough recovery time between shifts.

“The care at home workforce is estimated to be 86% female (2016). Research by UNISON in Glasgow in 2019 highlighted the gendered nature and problems that these shifts can cause, for example, when workers have caring responsibilities or when workers have menopause symptoms. The survey also identified a number of women workers who had developed health issues, including eating disorders, because the shift had disturbed eating patterns.

“Findings from a survey by Community Care and UNISON in 2015 suggest they are not being used in line with the law. Frontline staff told us they were trapped between trying to provide the best possible care and the pressures of a system that is damaging their health and wellbeing.

“The Fair Work Convention in Scotland's Social Care Sector Report in February 2019 identified the growth of split shifts in the care sector as one of the challenges to fair work.

“Conference asks the STUC Women's Committee to:

- prepare research into the use of split shifts in the care sector and to encourage research into split shifts, their use and the health / wellbeing consequences for the workforce;
- campaign within the STUC for this to be a priority matter in its work on health and safety; and

- campaign within the STUC, through its work in the Fair Work Convention, to consider whether these shifts are fit for purpose in the care sector, and in what, if any circumstances, they should be used to provide services to vulnerable people.”

Mover: Glasgow Trades Union Council

Amended Resolution no. 16 - Supporting Menopausal Women in the Workplace

“That this Conference believes that for too long the menopause has been a taboo subject in both society and our workplaces. Over 60% of Scottish women aged between 50-64 years old are in employment and will be working through the menopause and beyond.

“Conference notes that there are 34 known symptoms of the menopause, every woman will have a different experience and many will deal with multiple symptoms whilst juggling work and family lives.

“Conference commends the STUC Women’s Committee on their 2017 survey on menopause in the workplace. This survey highlighted the experiences of Scottish women affected by the menopause and also made policy suggestions for helping to reduce symptoms for women in the workplace.

“Conference also commends trade unions that have presented and negotiated a menopause policy with companies.

“However, Conference believes that more consideration needs to be given to helping menopausal women who work shifts and outside of office settings. Suggestions such as working from home, quiet areas, access to fans and flexible working may not be easily accessible to these women due to their working environments.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to consider the needs of shift workers and women employed away from offices when formulating policy suggestions. Further, that the STUC Women’s Committee research and recommendations on supporting workers going through the menopause be turned into a guide, which includes a model menopause policy, for reps and activists to be distributed to affiliates.”

Mover: **Associated Society of Locomotive
Engineers & Firemen**

Seconder: **National Union of Rail,
Maritime & Transport Workers**

Resolution no. 17 - Period Dignity

“That this Conference welcomes the decision of the Scottish Parliament in 2018 to ensure all schools, colleges and universities are legally obliged to provide free sanitary products. Despite various campaigns and legislation passed in Scotland, a lack of access to menstrual products continues to impact negatively on workers and their families.

“Studies suggest that 138,000 girls have missed school, because they can’t afford sanitary products. 11% were found to be putting their health at risk by using tampons longer than is recommended, or safe, because they didn’t have the supplies. A quarter of all schoolgirls have at some point been forced to use toilet paper, tissues and other unsuitable items.

“More than a fifth of parents have reported gone without something, often food, so that they could buy products.

“Conference welcomes the success of Period Dignity campaigns across workplaces and in wider society. In May 2018, Celtic Football Club has provided free sanitary products for fans. The campaign, organised by 3 working class football fans, made Celtic the first football club in the UK to install free dispensaries in the stadium toilets. Today that number is now 88. It’s time for employers to follow suit.

“We ask the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- investigate what Period Dignity campaigns trade unions in Scotland are running and lead a joint union approach;
- develop training on all women’s health issues from menstruation to menopause, accessible to all reps; and
- engage with political parties and businesses in Scotland to further promote this campaign.”

Mover: Public & Commercial Services Union

Resolution no. 18 - Workplace support for Mothers with Premature or Sick Babies

“That this Conference notes the birth of a child is usually a very special time, but unfortunately, it can be testing if the baby is born prematurely or with complex health needs. In Scotland, over 6,000 babies are born prematurely (before the 37th week of pregnancy) or sick every year. When a baby is born prematurely or is sick, it can be a difficult time for parents and the last thing that they should have to worry about is their place of employment or the amount of paid maternity leave they have left before they have to return to work.

“After the birth of a premature baby or sick baby, families will spend extended periods of time in hospital and in some cases may be forced to return to work either before the baby is released from hospital or shortly after being able to take their baby home. Even after the baby is allowed home there will be an increased number of hospital and doctor visits which could have an impact on the mother’s ability to remain in her employment.

“Conference believes that more could and should be done to support women during these difficult times and commends the work carried out by organisations such as BLISS Scotland and The Smallest Things to raise the profile of this important issue.

“Conference, therefore, calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- campaign for additional paid leave for women who have a premature baby or a sick baby born at full term;
- collect examples of best practice on how employers can support women who have had a premature baby or a sick baby born at full term, with a view to develop a model policy; and
- make plans to mark World Prematurity Day (17th November).”

Mover: UNISON Scotland

Resolution no. 19 - Pregnancy and Parenting in the Live Music Sector

“That this Conference notes that pregnancy and parenting are stigmatised in the live music sector. Promoters’ negative and discriminatory attitudes push musicians to hide pregnancy or delay disclosing in a bid to avoid losing work. Furthermore, as freelance self-employed workers, many musicians have less access to childcare and financial support due to the precarious nature of their work - the current system of Maternity Allowance for the self-employed often places the entire burden of childcare onto mothers, reinforcing gender inequalities at home and work.

“This has negative implications for musicians’ work opportunities and health. Parents are questioned about the need to bring children on tour, and venues and accommodation are often not child-friendly. Some UK and international opportunities for work (e.g. showcases, touring, arts funding, short-term projects) also require artists to provide 2 years of active work history, without which the artist is less likely to get work. This disadvantages those who have taken career breaks to facilitate parenting, and hinders their return to work. These issues cause undue stress to pregnant musicians and new parents, which can have additional adverse effects on their health, again further hindering their return to work.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- produce a short leaflet outlining freelance/self-employed workers’ parental and pregnancy-related rights, including breastfeeding in the workplace;
- campaign to raise awareness of support systems available to prospective parents, e.g. Government Maternity Allowance;
- raise this issue with the STUC General Council for the benefit of all primary caregivers, as this affects all parents irrespective of gender;
- lobby Government to extend Shared Parental Pay to self-employed workers;
- lobby Government to introduce a paternal/parental allowance for those who don’t qualify for statutory pay; and
- promote and support the Parental Pay Equality Campaign.”

Mover: Musicians’ Union

Amended Resolution no. 20 - Sexual Harassment

“That this Conference is deeply concerned by the compelling evidence of the increasing incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace, including sexist ‘jokes’ and ‘banter’, unwanted touching and the growing objectification of women and girls. Conference notes that the NASUWT’s research indicates that one in five members has experienced sexual harassment in the workplace by a colleague, manager, parent or pupil since becoming a teacher.

“Conference agrees with the TUC report ‘Still just a bit of Banter’ that trade union equality reps are well placed to support members subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace, and calls on Scottish Ministers to make good on their Fair Work promise of facility time for equality reps.

“Conference is concerned by the widespread reluctance among teachers and other staff to report harassment for fear of not being believed by employers and that even when this abuse is reported, in the majority of cases, little or no effective action is taken by employers to address the harassment.

“Conference asserts that this is not only having a damaging impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing of women teachers, but is also creating a climate of premature sexualisation of children, and in particular young girls.

“Conference affirms that schools should be places of safety and must be supported in tackling the problem of sexual harassment or violence towards either pupils or staff.

“Conference, therefore, calls upon the STUC Women’s Committee to campaign for:

- a mandatory requirement on employers to record and report incidents of sexual harassment and abuse against staff in schools;
- schools to foster an environment in which individuals can be confident that, when reporting incidents of sexual harassment, such complaints will be taken seriously and acted upon;
- increased awareness among employers that sexual harassment can intersect with other forms of prejudice and discrimination, including on grounds of age, class, disability, gender identity, race/ethnicity, religion/belief or sexuality;

- affiliates to work with other civil society organisations to end sexual harassment in the workplace and wider society; and
- the reintroduction of Section 40 of the Equality Act relating to third party harassment.”

Mover: NASUWT
Seconder: Public & Commercial Services Union

Resolution no. 21 - Non-Disclosure Agreements

“That this Conference notes with concern the misuse of confidentiality agreements (NDA’s) to silence workers and effectively brush organisations failings in duty of care under the carpet.

“Time and time again victims, predominantly women, of workplace bullying, harassment and sexual assault find themselves unsupported by their organisation and left with no option but to resign from their positions. With employers wielding the power and ability to drag the proceedings out, the typical outcome is the victims of this behaviour become worn down and desperate to move on with their lives. As a result, they are required to accept a pay-out coupled with a confidentiality agreement - a gagging clause.

“This is neither ethical nor progressive for the betterment of organisations. Where employers have failed to protect their employees there should be transparency to ensure that this failing is not repeated and, importantly, recognised if it is. Without this open scrutiny, organisations are enabled to hide toxic cultures still prevalent in the workplace and avoid pressure to wipe it out.

“Conference, therefore, calls upon the STUC to commence a campaign with affiliates to highlight the misuse of confidentiality agreements and call for a change in the law to make employers legally responsible for tackling sexual harassment at work.”

Mover: Fire Brigades Union

Resolution no. 22 - Gender Pension Gap

“That this Conference notes the difference between men and women’s retirement income is now almost 3 times larger than it was 10 years ago. Recent research by Profile Pensions shows Scotland’s gender pension gap is the highest in the UK, reaching almost 50% in Southern Scotland.

“The reasons for this are well documented and date back to the 1940s when the State Pension was introduced.

“Whilst the introduction of Auto-enrolment has helped many more women in Scotland to save for their retirement there are still far too many women excluded by the £10,000 earnings threshold or losing out on the tax relief through the loophole in net pay schemes.

“The pension gap will only narrow if women are able to save more for retirement and the biggest barrier to this is caring responsibilities. Part-time working has a bigger impact on retirement income than the gender pay gap.

“A study by the People’s Pension found that 49% of Scottish working women reduce their hours after having children, 29% of them leave work all together and 16% return to work in a lower grade. The main reason being the cost of childcare, which is the highest in Europe. Until this ‘motherhood penalty’ is addressed we will never achieve equality.

“Conference welcomes the work the STUC Women’s Committee has done already on raising awareness of the changes required to workplace pensions to address inequality but there is much more to be done. We therefore call on them to continue to raise awareness of the gender pension gap affecting Scottish women and campaign for a real change in pension policy - change which acknowledges and addresses the financial impact caring responsibilities have on womens’ ability to save for retirement.”

Mover: Aegis the Union

Resolution no. 23 - Women's Pensions

“That this Conference recognises the gender pensions’ gap in Scotland, arising from women’s lower levels of occupational and state pension and from UK Government policy.

“Conference condemns the actions of the UK Government in:

- rapidly increasing the state pension age for women born in the 1950s, despite women relying on this pension income;
- increasing the National Insurance contribution threshold for the full state pension; and
- enacting the GB Public Service Pensions Act 2013, which imposed detrimental public service pension schemes on sectors with a predominantly women’s workforce.

“Conference, however, condemns the continual interference of HM Treasury in public service pension provision, particularly the decision of HM Treasury to stop improvements in public service pension scheme provision, which should have occurred from 1 April 2019 onwards and which had been negotiated by sector unions on the public service pension scheme advisory boards.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to press the Scottish Government to undertake a gender pensions’ gap assessment across Scottish society and to publish its findings, and to develop a campaigning action plan in response to the Scottish Government’s report.”

Mover: NASUWT

Amended Resolution no. 24 - Public Sector Pay

“That this Conference notes the gains made by public sector workers who achieved pay settlements in excess of the 1% cap imposed by UK Government. Conference notes, however, that with RPI inflation running above 3% for most of 2018, and the 2019 settlements fall far short of restoring pay.

“Conference further notes that the UK Government continuing to limit pay increases in the civil service and related areas to between 1% and 1.5% is having a devastating effect on our members’ standard of living. PCS research shows the effect of that policy means that average civil service pay will have fallen in value by over 20% by 2020.

“Conference also recognises the essential role of public sector workers at sea employed on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, and notes the serious attacks on their pay, pensions and redundancy rights since 2008-09.

“A report by the Women’s Budget Group revealed that 73% of workers affected by the public sector pay cap are women. PCS’s ongoing pay campaign highlighted that the continuation of pay restraint has exacerbated the gender pay gap. Average pay in DWP and HMRC, where the majority of staff are women, is lower than average pay for the wider civil service. Until low pay is improved, the gap will continue.

“Conference recognises that the loosening of the pay cap by the Scottish Government was welcomed in 2018, but is disappointed that the Scottish Government’s commitment to pay restoration was not realised in the public sector pay policy that was published in December 2018. This was an opportunity lost towards restoring 10 years of real terms pay cuts.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work with the STUC General Council to co-ordinate a public sector pay campaign, including RMT’s current Fair Pay for RFA campaign, for above-inflation pay increases for all public sector workers, including:

- issuing material to explain the need for the pay rises; and
- sharing information about ballots and industrial action.”

Mover: **Public & Commercial Services Union**
Seconder: **National Union of Rail,**
 Maritime & Transport Workers

Resolution no. 25 - Women Seafarers

“That this Conference notes that the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) had the theme ‘Empowering Women in the Maritime Community’ for World Maritime Day 2019. The IMO has stated that this is an opportunity to highlight the important contribution of women all over the world to the maritime sector and will focus on raising awareness of gender equality.

“Conference also notes that the industry lobby group, Maritime UK, has produced a ‘Women in Maritime’ Charter, which states: ‘Achieving a balanced workforce at all levels in the maritime sector will undoubtedly improve culture, behaviour, outcomes, profitability and productivity’.

“Despite these initiatives, however, Conference is concerned at the parlous state of jobs held by UK and Scottish Ratings (seafarers who carry out a wide range of support roles on ship). As shipping companies routinely avoid the national minimum wage, practise nationality-based pay discrimination and impose contracted hours way beyond land-based health and safety requirements, there are immense structural barriers to recruiting a new generation of female seafarers in the UK shipping industry.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to campaign for more women seafarers, Ratings and Officers, and to highlight the barriers that exist to this in employment and equality legislation.”

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport
Workers**

Resolution no. 26 - Re-Inspiring Women

“That this Conference notes that women in the trade union movement have always played a significant role in social movements and social change.

“We can be proud of the role that trade union women played in achieving the Scottish Parliament and the 50/50 campaign amongst others. In the same way, the women of the trade union movement, played a major role in the Northern Ireland Peace Process and were directly involved in the Good Friday Agreement negotiations. Sadly, in the coverage of the 20th Anniversary of both the Good Friday Agreement and the Scottish Parliament, there was little mention of the role of women in the creation of either of them, let alone trade union women.

“Conference believes that if we want the role of women in any campaign to be remembered, we need to be the ones that tell that story.

“The STUC Women’s Committee was rightly commended for its Inspiring Women booklet which was produced a few years ago to raise awareness of the many women who have played a significant role in Scottish political life. However, Conference believes that it is important to make this a living document which is continually updated and the role women play celebrated.

“Conference applauds the campaign run in Northern Ireland to work with women’s groups to rename streets after inspiring women activists which raises awareness of these women to the wider public.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to work with affiliates and women’s groups across Scotland to refresh the Inspiring Women book, and spread the trade union women’s message more widely.”

Mover: UNISON Scotland

Resolution no. 27 - Safer Scottish Trains for Women

“That this Conference notes the importance of the safety critical role of a guard on a train and, in particular, the security they bring for women passengers.

“Conference notes that the RMT carried out a survey of guards, outlining how they have used their training throughout their careers with such matters as emergencies, sexual assaults, anti-social behaviour, security and providing assistance.

“The findings included:

- 51% of guards have prevented or deterred at least one sexual assault and 12% have dealt with more than 5 such incidents; and
- 98% of guards have dealt with anti-social behaviour, with 63% having tackled it over 20 times;
- 80% have prevented an emergency situation and a further 80% have dealt with an actual emergency.

“Conference, therefore, supports the call for all Scottish rail services to be staffed with a safety critical guard.

“Conference further notes the vital role that staffed stations have in proving security and assurance for women passengers and also notes with concern that 62% of Scotrail’s stations are unstaffed.

“Conference, therefore, also supports the RMT’s Staff our Stations (SOS) campaign, which campaigns for fully staffed stations in Scotland.”

**Mover: National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport
Workers**

Resolution no. 28 - Retail Sector Jobs

“That this Conference notes the current crisis in the retail sector, the publication of USDAW’s Industrial Strategy for Retail and the launch of USDAW’s Save Our Shops Campaign with action days taking place in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dumfries, Aberdeen and Kirkcaldy.

“Conference calls for immediate action from the Scottish and Westminster Governments to engage with the trade union movement and adopt an industrial strategy for the retail sector. This would include addressing the disproportionate impact faced by women in the retail sector. Women make up nearly 60% of the retail workforce and are therefore more likely to be impacted by increasing rates of automation, store closures and business rationalisation.

“There is a clear need to engage with women working in the sector. Thousands of retail jobs in Scotland have been lost in the last 12 months and nearly a third of retail businesses plan to shed staff in the coming months. Because the sector is female dominated, these losses have a disproportionate impact on women workers.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- highlight the disproportionate impact the crisis in retail and other sectors of the economy is having on women; and
- address the needs and concerns of women workers and ensure their voices are central to this work in its campaigning on this issue.”

Mover: Union of Shop, Distributive & Allied Workers

Resolution no. 29 - Women and Precarious Work in Higher Education

“That this Conference notes that the higher education landscape has changed in the last decades. The restructuring of universities has led to transformations such as reducing public expenditure, allocating resources based on competition and quasi-market disciplines. These structural transformations have had a huge effect on the working conditions, practices and relations of staff within universities. These different working contexts and conditions in HE shape the state of precariousness, overwork and dis-satisfaction.

“Precarity is a feminist issue not only one of terms and conditions, research confirmed that throughout their course of life women are more likely to work fewer hours, in low-paid and insecure jobs, and this is the case in HEIs. UCU Scotland has often argued about precarious work and gender in academia, precarious female academics suffer from exploitative gendered practices, evident in formal/legal recognition (staff status, rights and entitlements, pay and valuing of work) as well as in informal dimensions (social and decision-making power).

“Conference reaffirms its opposition to precarious work in higher education and all sectors and vows to support all unions and organisations campaigning against precarity and the use of atypical contracts.”

Mover: University & College Union Scotland

Resolution no. 30 - The Hostile Environment and Women

“That this Conference notes the nefarious consequences of the ‘hostile environment’, a label which describes a set of measures announced by the Home Secretary, Theresa May MP, in 2012, which became law via the Immigration Act of 2014 and 2016.

“The hostile environment includes measures to limit access to work, housing, health care and a system of citizen-on-citizen immigration checks.

“Conference acknowledges that these measures are hostile to immigration in general, and such hostility has manifested in aspects of the Brexit referendum (2016) and in the Windrush scandal (2018).

“Conference is aware that research has demonstrated the connection between the ‘hostile environment’ and the alarming rise of racism, Islamophobia and general anti-immigration sentiments in the UK, and crucially an increased risk of discrimination and bias in applying such policies. Less attention has been paid to the impact of Brexit and current immigration policies on the most vulnerable within the immigrant population, and on women in particular.

“Conference accepts the findings of the Women's Budget Group that in its briefing on the gendered economic impact of Brexit highlighted dangers concerning women's employment rights, rising food prices and cuts for support services helping those who survive domestic abuse. Many of the gains in employment law over the last 40 years reflect the greater harmonisation of terms and conditions across the EU, including the rights to paid parental leave, and equal treatment for part time workers, the majority of whom are women.

“Conference recognises that Brexit and general anti-immigration attitudes have many causes, the ‘hostile environment’ being among the main ones.

“Conference resolves to reject the current immigration policies which stem from the ‘hostile environment’, in spite of the Home Office attempt to relabel the ‘hostile environment’ as the ‘compliant environment’ in 2017.”

Mover: University & College Union Scotland

Resolution no. 31 - Gender Equality in Live Performance

“That this Conference supports increased representation of women, non-binary and trans artists in live music performance and on radio and television, in particular on programmes which are funded by tax, at both local and national level and by trade union funded events.

“Conference acknowledges the lack of women, non-binary and trans artists appearing on festival programmes and in venues throughout the country, both in grassroot and national venues. This not only results in a lack of visible representation for aspiring artists, but also feeds hegemonic male dominance in the industry. Women, non-binary and trans artists face disproportionate discrimination in pay and practice, in how they are treated within the music industry. Gender equality is about equality for people of ALL genders, and this is especially important given instances of transphobia and trans-exclusion in the sector and in society.

“Conference supports influencing government bodies to be proactive in seeking gender equality through setting requirements for government endorsed, sponsored and/or funded (i.e. publicly funded) music activities to address gender inequality in pay and representation. Through government policy, and accountability for those in receipt of government funding and/or support, gender equality can be embedded into practice in the sector.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- lobby government bodies to introduce gender equality requirements such as policy/position statements for any publicly funded or government supported/endorsed music activities, to ensure that any event with state support meets a minimum benchmark of enacting gender equality; and
- work with relevant bodies in the arts sector, such as trade unions and advocacy groups, to tackle trans-exclusion and transphobia.”

Mover: Musicians’ Union

Resolution no. 32 - Homelessness

“That this Conference notes the rise in numbers of rough sleepers over recent years and believes trade unionists can play a role in helping this vulnerable group.

“Conference notes research by Crisis, the homelessness charity, which found 58% of women sleeping rough had been intimidated or threatened with violence in the 12 months to February 2017. The same research showed that one in four female rough sleepers has been sexually assaulted in the past year.

“Conference notes the role of faith communities and faith workers in supporting rough sleepers and in the provision of support and social care.

“Conference also recognises the work being done by the Scottish Parliament to try and reduce the numbers forced to sleep on the streets.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- lobby the Scottish Government to engage with providers, companies and employers to support those who find themselves homeless, including ex-forces, into meaningful employment, with decent salary levels, for them to earn the means to support their home need;
- organise for collection points for sanitary products at all STUC events to be given to homeless shelters;
- work with third sector organisations that support homeless women across Scotland; and
- support trade unionists wishing to volunteer to help with hot meal services, including those offered by faith communities and faith workers, that exist in most towns and cities with advice, as well as the creation of a list of hot meal services that they can volunteer with.”

Mover: Community

Emergency Resolution no. 1 - Asda - Respect Your Workers

“That this Conference notes the protests that are taking place at Asda stores around Scotland and in other parts of Britain against Asda’s attempts to impose detrimental contract changes on its predominately female supermarket workforce, under threat of dismissal.

“Conference condemns the actions of Asda management in seeking to bully these workers and expresses its support for their campaign through the GMB union to bring Asda back to the negotiating table.

“Conference also notes that the provisions of the new contract, which remove paid breaks, reduce night shift premiums, reduce holidays, and introduce a new flexibility clause giving the employer the ability to alter days, hours, rota start and finish times, represents an attack on the value of work done by predominately working class women.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to support resolving this issue by publicly campaigning against the imposition of the new contract.

“Conference further calls on the STUC Women’s Committee and the STUC General Council to raise this issue as a matter of priority with the Scottish and UK Governments and encourage them to bring pressure on the company to return to negotiations.”

Mover: GMB Scotland

Emergency resolution no. 2 – WASPI Judgement

“That this Conference notes the judgement of the High Court in England on 3 October, which found against the WASPI women. Conference also notes that WASPI campaigners are still considering options in relation to appealing this judgement and further notes the longstanding support of this Conference for the WASPI campaign.

“Conference resolves to continue supporting the WASPI campaign and considers that, despite the failure of the judicial review at this stage, options remain for achieving justice for the WASPI women, not least because of the evidence produced by WASPI of the strong support for remedial actions, which would assist women among many cross-party Members of Parliament.

“Conference asks that the STUC Women’s Committee and the STUC General Council, working with others, use every opportunity to ensure that the WASPI cause is heard and promoted during the expected General Election, whenever it is held, and that pressure is put on all parties to ensure that the next UK Parliament returns a majority in support of the WASPI campaign aims.”

Mover: STUC Women’s Committee

Emergency resolution no. 3 – Solidarity with Women in Chile and the Chilean People

“That this Conference expresses its total condemnation of the Chilean Government’s repressive and violent response to the mass peaceful demonstrations by the Chilean people, over a million taking to the streets on Saturday 25 October 2019, including firing on unarmed demonstrators resulting in more than 20 people being confirmed killed and hundreds injured.

“People are coming together peacefully to protest against the regime and policies of President Pinera: extreme social inequality, the dismantling of union rights, labour and social protections, and including huge student loan debts, and the privatisation of public health, transport, pensions and education.

“Conference recognises the vital importance of international support and solidarity and calls for the STUC Women’s Committee to send a message of support and solidarity to the Chilean TUC, and commits to link up with appropriate solidarity organisation and actions in Scotland.”

Mover: Unite the Union

Emergency resolution no. 4 - Solidarity with Refugee and Migrant Workers

“That this Conference sends our thoughts to the victims and the families of the 39 people who sadly lost their lives in the back of a lorry last week.

“Conference stands in solidarity with the 37,000 people who are forced to flee their homes every day because of violence and persecution. As a result, in 2019 alone, 2573 people have lost their lives.

“Conference recognises how migrant and refugee women’s lives across the world are impacted by issues such as poverty, sexual harassment, sex discrimination and violence against women and girls.

“Conference notes that with the theme of this year’s Conference being eradicating child poverty, we acknowledge the fact that at least one migrant or refugee child is reported dead or missing every single day.

“When people are drowning in the ocean, being washed up at sea and dying in the back of lorries, Conference also notes that current movement provisions are not fit for purpose.

“Conference also recognises that no human should ever be considered illegal and calls on our trade union allies to extend their solidarity with refugee and migrant communities.

“Furthermore, Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to reach out to refugee and migrant groups in Scotland and particularly to women in refugee and migrant communities, in order to strengthen our movement.”

Mover: Unite the Union

Emergency resolution no. 5 - Firefighters must not be Blamed for the Grenfell Tower Disaster

“That this Conference notes the publication on Monday 28th October 2019 of the public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire and the media reports on the same day where firefighters have been warned they are facing criticism for the tragic events that happened on the night of 14 June 2017 at Grenfell Tower.

“Since the Garnock Court fire in Ayr in 1999, the FBU warned all governments of the dangers of flammable cladding. The Scottish Parliament listened and changed legislation when other governments ignored.

“Deregulation of building safety standards, the dismantling of the fire and rescue service and the decades of the lack of investment in safe housing by governments are to blame.

“Firefighters must not be used as scapegoats for this horrific fire. Conference asks the STUC Women’s Committee to support the FBU’s campaign for Justice for Grenfell, and sends a message of solidarity from this Conference to all firefighters impacted by Grenfell where many of them risked their lives to save as many residents as they could.”

Mover: Fire Brigades Union

Emergency resolution no. 6 – Leaked Government Paper – “Update to EPSG on Level Playing Field Negotiations”

“That this Conference is alarmed at the content of the leaked Government Paper – “Update to EPSG on Level Playing Field Negotiations”.

“This document boasts that: “”UK negotiators successfully resisted the inclusion of all UK-wide LPF rules, and UK level playing field commitments will be negotiated in the context of the future UK-EU free trade agreement”.

“Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to have discussions with the Scottish Government to ensure that our workers’ rights, and especially those affecting women, are protected within any European Union exit deal.”

Mover: Community

Emergency resolution no. 7 – Thomas Cook

“That this Conference notes that with the news that Thomas Cook Group was going into liquidation, thousands of workers in an instant lost their jobs, including many locations in Scotland. The suddenness of the demise of their employer meant that Thomas Cook employees were thrown into deep uncertainty about their own and their families’ futures, and how they were going to find alternative work to pay the bills.

“The effect of liquidation amongst Thomas Cook’s chain of high street shops has been most acutely felt by women who make up the majority of the workforce.

“In the last few weeks, an announcement has been made that 99% of employees have received their redundancy, although other compensation is still due.

“The decision by Hays Travel to purchase 555 shops across the UK, including 55 in Scotland, has given some hope to workers of continuing in the trade that they love.

“Despite these developments, however, the failure by Thomas Cook’s management to consult has led to claims for protective awards under TULRCA, where 20 or more employees have been made redundant at an establishment (workplace).

“Many former Thomas Cook shops did not employ 20 or more employees, but the effect of the failure to consult has had an equally devastating impact on the staff. For this reason, Conference calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to argue that, despite the legal provisions, Scottish Thomas Cook workers should all receive the benefits of an uncapped protective award payment wherever they worked.”

Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs’ Association

II - MOTION LOST

Motion no. 33 - Palm Oil, Habitat Destruction and Labour Abuse

“That this Conference is concerned about deforestation – particularly virgin rain forest – for the purposes of producing palm oil. This has severe and well-established effects on climate change and often involves the abuse of child labour and widespread discrimination against women workers.

“For many women, the working conditions on plantations are precarious, characterised by minimal health and safety protections, very short-term and informal work contracts or alternatively as unpaid support for husbands who otherwise struggle to achieve the very high harvest targets imposed on them.

“Palm oil is used in a vast array of products in supermarkets and is the source of 38% of all vegetable oils used in the world. It is a major ingredient in biofuels, promoted as an alternative to fossil fuels, with over half of Europe’s palm oil imports going into biodiesel. Whilst deforestation is estimated to make palm oil worse for climate change than the use of diesel alone, the EU continues to subsidise the import of palm oil for use in fuel.

“Efforts are being made to produce palm oil sustainably and ethically. Greenpeace has called on companies to reveal their sources of palm oil: some have done so where they have switched to sustainable growers, but many have refused.

“Conference therefore calls on the STUC Women’s Committee to:

- work with international trade union organisations to improve conditions in palm oil production, especially for women workers; and
- support campaigns for sustainable growth of palm oil and an end to catastrophic deforestation and the raising of consumer awareness.”

Mover: Transport Salaried Staffs’ Association